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IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant(s): Ross, et al.

Examiner: Toan C. To

Serial No.: 10/051,968

Group Art Unit: 3616

Filed: January 16, 2002

For: SPACER APPARATUS FOR SUSPENSION BEAM BUSHING ASSEMBLIES

PROPOSED CLAIM AMENDMENT

Dear Examiner To:

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me on short notice last week. Continuing what we discussed during the interview, and per your suggestion, we are sending this informal proposal regarding an amendment to Claim 1 for your review and comment.

Proposed Claim 1 recites additional structure, pursuant to your suggestion. More particularly, rather than reciting means for substantially preventing relative movement of a spacer disk, we propose to amend Claim 1 to recite an integral spacer apparatus that includes a spacer disk, together with structure means formed with the spacer disk for immovably engaging the discrete bushing assembly. We believe that this amendment distinguishes Claim 1 over U.S. Patent No. 4,809,960.

Please call me to discuss this Proposed Amendment at your earliest convenience.

Proposed Claim:

1. A suspension assembly of a heavy-duty vehicle axle/suspension system, said assembly having a beam, said beam including a bushing assembly for pivotally mounting the beam on a vehicle frame via a frame hanger, wherein the improvement comprises:

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a) ~~means for substantially preventing relative movement of at least one spacer disk~~
~~an integral spacer apparatus, said spacer apparatus including a spacer disk, the spacer apparatus~~
~~being vertically disposed between said bushing assembly and a respective one of a pair of spaced~~
~~sidewalls of said frame hanger, said spacer disk being formed of a generally rigid polymer and~~
~~being formed with means for engaging the bushing assembly to generally being prevented from~~
~~prevent movement of the spacer disk relative to the said bushing assembly, whereby excessive~~
~~wear to the said spacer disk generally is prevented.~~

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